



Testimony in support of S.B 4 – AN ACT CONCERNING THE CONNECTICUT CLEAN AIR ACT.

To: Chairman Lemar, Chairman Haskell, Vice Chair Cassano, Vice Chair Simms, Ranking members Carney and Somers and members.

From: Jim Jinks, Chief Advocate

Bike Cheshire is a community nonprofit founded in 2018 and dedicated to make Cheshire a more bike-friendly community. Bike Cheshire operates a community bike share, organizes group ride events and promotes bike riding for better health, safer streets, more successful small businesses and building community in Cheshire and beyond.

We urge all Transportation Committee members to support S.B. 4. It's time we start to build a greener and cleaner transportation system in Connecticut. We particularly support the inclusion of e-bikes in the CHEAPR rebate program and especially for low to middle-income families. We ask that the value cap be increased to \$3000 and that the rebate be increased from \$500 to at least \$1000.

As it happens, these provisions would be of particular interest to workers and employers in Cheshire's industrial zone. We have several large logistics/warehouse businesses that employ many low to middle-income workers from nearby Meriden and Waterbury, even though many of these workers must rely on a less than perfect bus route and car sharing arrangements to get to their jobs in Cheshire.

The center of Meriden is only 7-8 miles away and the center of Waterbury is only 11-12 miles away. These are distances that are well within the range for a commute via an e-bike. Therefore, we believe including e-bikes in the CHEAPR rebate program would help our largest employers in Cheshire attract more workers from nearby population centers and help current workers, by making it easier (and still very affordable) to get to and from work in Cheshire. There are undoubtedly many, many other examples throughout our state where e-bikes would be a great transportation solution for low to middle-income workers (not to mention commuters with higher incomes.) Making the purchase of e-bikes more affordable is an investment in economic development, workforce development and a cleaner, more efficient transportation system.

We also ask that S.B.4 be modified to add two seats to the CHEAPR advisory committee – one seat for a person from the bicycle community (with knowledge of e-bikes) and one from PURA. Lastly, we ask Committee members to support what we feel may be one of the most important and impactful aspects of the bill – the provisions that require state and regional development agencies to offset traditional transportation infrastructure projects with climate-friendly, zero emission infrastructure like multi-use trails and networks of separated/protected cycle tracks (i.e., bike lanes.)

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this important legislation.